

Message Text

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44

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EURE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5556

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, UK

SUBJECT: GOVERNMENT DECLARES EMERGENCY TO DEAL WITH
ENERGY SHORTAGE

1. HOME SECRETARY ROBERT CARR ANNOUNCED IN COMMONS
NOVEMBER 13 THAT PRESENT SITUATION IN COAL AND
ELECTRICAL GENERATING INDUSTRIES CONSTITUTED THREAT
SUFFICIENTLY SERIOUS TO JUSTIFY TAKING IMMEDIATE
PRECAUTIONARY EMERGENCY POWERS. FOR FIFTH TIME SINCE
1970, GOVT HAS THEREFORE PROCLAIMED STATE OF EMERGENCY
TO DEAL WITH THREATENED ENERGY SHORTAGES RESULTING FROM
UNION ACTIONS IN THE ELECTRICAL GENERATING AND MINING
INDUSTRIES.

2. IN TELLING COMMONS OF DECISION, CARR SAID THAT
"ONE AND ONLY REASON" FOR DECLARATION OF STATE OF
EMERGENCY WAS THREAT OF COAL AND ELECTRICITY SHORTAGES.
HE GRANTED THAT THE MINERS HAD THE RIGHT TO REFUSE TO
WORK OVERTIME, BUT INSISTED THAT THE GOVT HAD AN URGENT
DUTY TO TAKE ACTION TO PROTECT ITS FUEL SUPPLIES.

3. THE NATIONAL UNION OF MINEWORKERS (NUM), AFTER
REJECTING AN OFFER BY THE COAL BOARD AMOUNTING TO
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APPROXIMATELY A 13 PERCENT PAY PACKAGE, HAS BANNED

OVERTIME WORK SINCE YESTERDAY (NOVEMBER 12). ALTHOUGH THE REAL EFFECT OF THE BAN WOULD NOT BE APPARENT FOR ABOUT ANOTHER WEEK, THE NUM REPORTEDLY ESTIMATES THAT ITS REFUSAL TO WORK OVERTIME, WHICH INCLUDES BAN ON WEEKEND MAINTENANCE, WOULD RESULT IN A CUT OF ONE THIRD IN COAL OUTPUT PER WEEK. NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE COAL BOARD WILL BE RECONVENED ON THURSDAY, BUT IT DOES NOT APPEAR LIKELY THAT THE GOVT WILL MOVE VERY FAR FROM ITS CURRENT OFFER, WHICH IS WITHIN THE LIMITS OF CURRENT PAY BOARD REGULATIONS.

4. INSTRUCTIONS ARE GOING OUT TONIGHT TO ALL GOVT DEPARTMENTS AND NATIONALIZED INDUSTRIES TO REDUCE POWER AND FUEL CONSUMPTION BY TEN PERCENT. AN APPEAL WILL BE MADE TO THE PUBLIC TO TAKE SIMILAR ECONOMY ACTION. THE GOVT REGARDS A CALL FOR VOLUNTARY CUTS AS THE FIRST STAGE OF ITS FUEL SAVING STRATEGY.

5. FURTHER COMMENT AND ANALYSIS WILL FOLLOW BY SEPTTEL.

ANNENBERG

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